



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref: EDB(I) ISP/1/1/96 Pt. 75

電話 Telephone: 3509 7512

來函檔號 Your Ref: :

傳真 Fax Line: :

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To: Supervisors / Principals of All Private Schools offering Non-local Curriculum

Dear Supervisor / Principal,

Class Arrangements for Private Schools offering Non-local Curriculum

Hong Kong is facing a very trying time as we are fighting against the current fifth wave of COVID-19 outbreak, with the number of confirmed cases reaching record highs. The Government is committed to adopting thorough and robust measures with the aim of achieving “dynamic zero infection”. The Chief Executive announced on 22 February 2022 a comprehensive plan in the coming two to three months to control the current epidemic situation, including the launch of Compulsory Universal Testing (“CUT”). Such anti-epidemic efforts require enormous resources and manpower from all walks of life. The school sector is one of the key members of our community, and we need your support and assistance in joining hands with other sectors in the fight against the epidemic.

Class Arrangements

To support the comprehensive plan, we will need a large number of testing facilities to facilitate the CUT operation. At the same time, it is no less important to ensure that most of the activities in the community are kept to the necessary minimum in order to reduce the viral spread. In this regard, the Chief Executive announced on the same date that part of the summer holidays of all schools in this school year would be advanced to March and April (until the schools’ Easter Holidays) and the school year would be extended to August (referred to as “special holiday arrangements” below), with a view to pulling efforts and resources of all sectors together to achieve “dynamic zero infection”.

This would also enable students to have more learning time through face-to-face lessons during the school year when the epidemic situation is expected to subside in summer months.

Following the announcement, we have had very useful exchanges with international schools and other private schools offering non-local curriculum on the special holiday arrangements. Many schools in the sector have conveyed to us the problems they would have in implementing the arrangements. In particular, we were given to understand that quite a number of their staff members would have to leave Hong Kong to reunite with their families or work elsewhere after the expiry of their school contracts in around June/July, and many non-local students would also have to return to their hometowns during this period. Hence, students of these schools would hardly be able to benefit from the special holiday arrangements by having more face-to-face learning in summer months. Instead, their total learning time might be reduced if they are not allowed to have online classes in March and April, which would have a significant impact on their learning. On the other hand, we appreciate very much that schools in the sector are supportive of the Government's anti-epidemic efforts by offering their school premises as CUT or vaccination centres, if needed. At the same time, schools have also undertaken to put in place support measures to facilitate the release of their staff and students for testing during the CUT operation whilst online classes are being held, and to put in extra efforts to encourage their students to receive vaccination for the protection of their school community.

In light of the above considerations, the Education Bureau ("EDB") has decided to allow flexibility to international schools and other private schools offering non-local curriculum to continue their online classes during March and April without having to implement the special holiday arrangement. However, during the special holiday period for other schools i.e., from 7 March to the last date of the school's Easter Holidays (referred to as "special holiday period" below), international schools and other private schools offering non-local curriculum must not arrange any face-to-face classes and any other on-campus activities (except for the assessment of those sitting for non-local public examinations and the on-campus group vaccination as elaborated below). Nevertheless, if individual schools could make special arrangements by advancing part of the summer holidays in July and August to March and April, we would welcome those schools to do so as far as possible.

We understand that some students sitting for non-local public examinations this year may have to return to schools in March and April for compulsory assessment activities of those public examinations. In the circumstances that such assessment could not be rescheduled, international schools and private schools offering non-local curriculum are allowed to arrange such assessment activities in schools, and they should strictly put in place the

sanitisation and social distancing measures as stipulated in the “Health Protection Measures for Schools” issued by EDB and the “Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of COVID-19” issued by the Centre for Health Protection. However, face-to-face classes and on-campus mock examinations (whose assessment results do not form part of the public examinations assessment) for those students are not allowed.

Similar to other schools, international schools and other private schools offering non-local curriculum are not required to remain open during the special holiday period (albeit no special holiday arrangements in those schools), and parents should arrange their children to stay at home as far as possible. Parents who have genuinely special needs to send their children back to schools should communicate with the schools in advance to make appropriate arrangements. In any event, all schools should avoid requiring school staff to return to campus for work except under strictly necessary circumstances (e.g. designated staff-in-charge for the opening and closing of school premises as CUT centres).

As regards the school arrangements after the Easter Holidays, EDB will make announcement nearer the time taking into account the epidemic situation of the time.

Schools should remind parents to take epidemic preventive measures and pay close attention to the physical and mental well-being of their children as Hong Kong is combating against the epidemic. Students should avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation. They should maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and take adequate rest in order to strengthen their immunity. If teachers, school staff or students are feeling unwell (even the symptoms are very mild), they must not return to school and should seek medical advice promptly so as to receive appropriate diagnoses and treatments.

Vaccination Arrangements

In view of the severe epidemic situation in the community, EDB strongly urges parents and schools to arrange eligible students to get vaccinated as early as possible. A high vaccination rate will help build a more effective protective barrier and create favourable conditions for early resumption of face-to-face classes. To facilitate early vaccination of students, schools should continue to facilitate and encourage students to get vaccinated, including arranging students to return to schools for vaccination or group bookings to Community Vaccination Centres, etc. during the special holiday period. If schools have difficulties or doubts regarding vaccination arrangements, they may contact the respective Senior School Development Officer / Senior Service Officer. Schools may also refer to the latest information from EDB and the Civil Service Bureau regarding various assistance on student vaccination arrangements.

“Vaccine Pass” Arrangements

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind schools of the “Vaccine Pass” arrangements that commenced on 24 February 2022. Except for those who are granted exemptions, all teaching and non-teaching staff, persons providing on-campus services and visitors would be required to present vaccination records of at least the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine prior to their entry into school premises. Teachers or school staff directly employed by schools who have received only one dose of vaccination should receive the second dose of vaccination during the period within eight weeks after 24 February 2022 (i.e. have received the second dose before 21 April 2022). The above measures would still be put in place during the suspension of face-to-face class (or the implementation of special holiday arrangements, if applicable). The “Vaccine Pass” arrangements are not applicable to students. Parents accompanying their children to receive vaccination on campus are also not covered by the requirements.

Hong Kong is facing unprecedented challenges posed by the rapid worsening of the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic. We need all members of the community to collaborate and concentrate on fighting the epidemic. EDB is grateful to the school sector, including school staff, parents and students, for their collaboration on the anti-epidemic work over the past years. We are also thankful to schools for putting in place the epidemic preventative measures properly, and boosting the vaccination rate in Hong Kong, particularly amongst teachers and students. As we require a large number of community testing centres and vaccination facilities, and are at the same time in full steam increasing the vaccination rate in Hong Kong, in particular for younger children, we count on the continuous support from international schools and other private schools offering non-local curriculum, in order to help students and the community to return to normal life early. We would also continue to count on you in maintaining effective communication with your community (staff members, parents and students alike) on the above arrangements.

Should you have any enquiries on the above arrangements, please contact your respective Senior School Development Officers / Senior Services Officers.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Priscilla To)
for Secretary for Education